

The Halyard

Virginia Department of Education
Office of Educational Technology

December 9, 2005



Charlie's Chatter

It is hard to believe that it has been one month since the last Halyard was published. I apologize for not publishing on a regular basis.

Good News! We have moved! Right before we left for the Educational Technology Leadership Conference, we were told to pack our bags! We were to move to the 22nd floor! We were so excited. We are still not in permanent quarters as they are still remodeling and have yet to build our permanent home, but at least we have a little more space.

This morning, I was able to watch the sunrise for the first time in a long time. One of the companies that lies between Route 60 and the James River hangs a giant Christmas tree from a crane and it graces the sky with it's red and green lights. What a delightful way to start my day!

On another topic, I have subscribed to AASL Information Literacy list-serve. It provides an interesting discussion on how others are trying to weave these skills and the challenge of

having others recognize that it is not just the librarians responsibility to teach students how to locate, use, analyze, create, evaluate, produce and communicate information.

I would like to hear how you are weaving it into your school. Send you information to me and I will share it with others.

Being as I am a "Christmassy" type of person, may I wish you a Merry Christmas and a wish for blessings and joy in the coming year.



Holiday Games

"Talking Tales" are animated picture books, complete with music, sound and narration, in a format that kids will love. You can listen at your own pace or sit back and let the "Talking Tales" read to you!
<http://calgarypubliclibrary.com/kids/story/welcome.htm>

TRIM A TREE

<http://www.northpole.com/Clubhouse/Games/TrimTree/>

Word Search

<http://www.northpole.com/Clubhouse/Games/WordSearch/Decorations.html>

Arctic Habitat Concentration

<http://www.mnh.si.edu/arctic/game/>

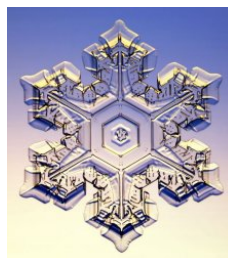
Counting Money

<http://www.northpole.com/Clubhouse/Games/CountMoney/>

Snow Crystal Photographs

Snowflakes are temporary works of art. After just a few short minutes on the ground, a fallen snowflake will lose its ornate structure, its unique pattern that will never again be repeated. Photography

allows us to preserve a few of these minute masterpieces and to examine their form up close. Check out:
<http://www.its.caltech.edu/%7Eatomic/snowcrystals/photos/photos.htm>



Make Your Own Snowflakes!

<http://www.highhopes.com/snowflakes.html>

<http://www3.ns.sympatico.ca/dstredulinsky/home.html>

December Around The World

All over the world December is the biggest holiday month of the year. Each continent, each country, each city and even each family has its own December traditions. It's not only Christmas and New Year that are important but there are also other traditions. In a nutshell December is not only a time to remember the birth of Jesus, a time of loving and understanding but it is also a time of give and receive presents, all over the world! But who would bring your presents if you were in Australia or even in Zimbabwe? How would you celebrate a December tradition if you lived in Brazil or Japan!

Australia has to celebrate Christmas in the heat of the summer. It's also the time that many Australians look back to their British roots and that is why a traditional Christmas meal includes a turkey and often a flaming plum pudding for dessert. Christmas shopping is often done in shorts and t-shirts and the days following Christmas are filled with neighbours backyard parties and barbecues or a picnic in the park, even swimming and partying on the beach! Santa Clause rides water skis, wears a white beard and red bathing trunks.

Belgium's December tradition is on the 6th of December. On the evening of December 5th, St. Nicolas, dressed in Bishop's robes, rides about on a horse; the children leave their shoes next to the fireplace and leave vegetables in them for the horse and a drink for St. Nicolas and assistant, Black Pete. The next morning the children find their toys and sweets, which came through the chimney, at the fireplace. At Christmas children receive presents from their parents, not from Santa Clause, he doesn't exist in Belgium.

Brazil has Papai Noel who arrives by helicopter, at Maracana Soccer Stadium in Rio at the beginning of December. It is a big party, singers, dancers and local authorities join the event to welcome Christmas and Papai Noel. On Christmas Eve and Christmas Day the family pray, sing, eat and drink together. They open presents after midnight when they are delivered by Papai Noel. Sometimes families sit around the tree on Christmas Day, which can be any tree from a pine tree till a palm tree, and open their gifts.

Danish flag decorates the home as well as the Christen tree during Christmas. This feast is the most important event on the Danish calendar. The shops and companies close very early on Christmas Eve. They light up thousands of candles (more than any other country on earth). Julemanden who's carrying a sack and is drawn by reindeer brings the children's gifts. And after the family has eaten a big meal they leave a bowl of the traditional rice pudding for the Julnissie – a mischievous elf who lives in the attic. If the pudding placates him, he will watch over the household throughout the year.

France celebrates Christmas together with the whole family. The children put their shoes in front of the fireplace and hope for a present from Pere Noel. His partner Le Pere Fouettard (Father Spanker) would "reward" bad children with a spanking. The midnight service on Christmas Eve is traditionally followed by a meal called 'le reveillon'. Reveillon means to wake up or the first call of the day. It is a symbolic spiritual awaking to the meaning of Christ's birth. And in the Northern France, the children get their present on the 6th of December, on St. Nicolas Day instead then on Christmas Day.

Germany has the Advent to count the last weeks of Christmas. When the Advent arrives the Christmas Markets open and then it is not too far to Christmas. But the celebrations begin on December 6th, St. Nicholas Day. Just like St. Nicolas in Belgium, France and the Netherlands is he carrying a "book of sins". If kids have been good their shoe is filled with delicious edibles and if they been badly then they get twigs. The Christmas tree has a mysterious magic for the young children because they are not allowed to see it until Christmas Eve. Father tells a story to the kids somewhere in the house while the mother is decorating the tree with apples, candy, nuts, cookies, cars, angels, candles or lights.

Japan doesn't have an official celebration of Christmas, as less than one percent of the population is Christian. But as the Christmas industry grew they became interested in the Christian celebration and absorbed some of the

customs in their own society. Nowadays they also have a Christmas tree and turkey. Hoteiosho, a god from the Japanese pantheon, brings the gifts. Since he has eyes in the back of his head he can see the behaviour of the children in Japan.

Netherlands has the celebration on the 6th of December. Dutch children are told that he arrives from Spain on a steamer on his feast day. A couple of weeks before his anniversary he arrives the Netherlands on a big steamer. All children can see this arrival on Television. The night of the 5th December the children put their shoes in front of the chimney, filled with candy, hay, nuts. He also has an assistant, black Pete. See also Belgium, Germany, France.

Poland is a land of intriguing traditions and legends. On Christmas Eve, the whole family watch the sky anxiously, hoping to be the first to cry out the, "the star!" – "little star" or Gwiazdka, in remembrance of the Star of Bethlehem. The moment the star appears, everyone exchanges greetings and good wishes. After supper the guests stay at the table until the host give them a sign. Then they all rise in unison and leave. This is the result of an old superstition that the first to rise will die before the next Christmas Eve. Gift giving plays only a minor role in the rituals.

Zimbabwe has something as Fellowship, which is a big part of Christmas Day. The gifts are given by the father, usually clothes and candy. The week starts with gathering loaves of bread, jam, tea and sugar. The children sing their song that they practice for this special day. After the service, as the sun goes down, herd boys return to their flocks and children play games around the fire. After the sun sinks in the west, Christmas is officially over.

How do Snowflakes Form?

(Lansing State Journal, October 8, 1997)

It turns out that "pure" snow is made up of snowflakes which are made up of from 2 to 200 separate snow crystals. Snow crystals are crystals that have formed around tiny bits of dirt that have been carried up into the atmosphere by the wind. So snow crystals are really soil particles that have been dressed up in ice.

Scientists think that there are really four different shapes of snow crystals. The simplest shape is a long needle shaped like a spike. The other shapes all have six sides. One of them is a long, hollow column that is shaped like a six-sided prism. There are also thin, flat six-sided plates. And lastly there are intricate, six-pointed stars.

The shape that a snow crystal will take is dependent upon the temperature at which it was formed. The temperature in the highest clouds is around -30°F and they are made up exclusively of ice crystal columns. The other three shapes are formed in a narrow temperature range. When the temperature in the clouds is 3° to 10°F the star shaped crystals form. From 10°-18°F the plates form, and from 18°-23°F columns form. From 23°-27°F needles form and from 27°-32°F the plates reappear.

As the snow crystals grow they become heavier and fall towards Earth. If they spin like tops as they fall then they may be perfectly symmetrical when they hit the Earth. But if they fall in a sideways fashion then they end up lopsided. Falling snow crystals clump to-

gether forming snowflakes. Each snowflake is made up of from 2 to about 200 separate crystals.



Turning Ugly Ducklings Into Swans

This month's issue of Teacher Librarian has an article of interest for those who are implementing the tenets learned this summer's workshop.

The article defines several of the newer learning theories such as constructivist, problem-based, inquiry-based, project-based and strategies which combine all three together.

A lesson plan focusing on *Charlotte's Web* is included. It includes

Learning is hard work, and motivating children to work can be a challenge.

state standards, information literacy standards, prior knowledge, anticipatory set, and procedures.

Another lesson plan is on the civil rights movement which includes Internet sites and assessment procedures.

An extensive bibliography accompanies the article by Jennifer Robbins, assistant professor at Central Missouri State University.

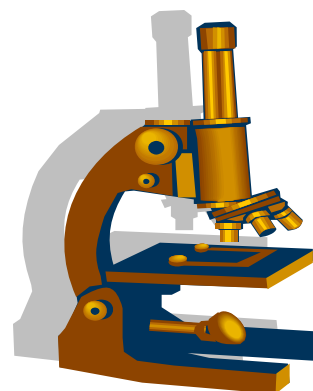
Forensics In the Classroom

As part of its ongoing commitment to education, Court TV is pleased to bring forensics to high school science classrooms nationwide. This FREE, exciting new program conforms to nationally recognized standards and was developed as part of a continuing educational partnership with the **American Academy of Forensic Sciences**. New for this year we are proud to add two units - one for middle school, the other for high school - that were also developed in collaboration with the **National Science Teachers Association**

(NSTA). The NSTA is the largest organization in the world committed to promoting excellence and innovation in science teaching.

By incorporating key scientific concepts and lab experiments into creative, forensic-based mysteries and activities, FIC provides a way to engage and teach students about the expanding and fascinating world of forensic science.

http://www.courttv.com/forensics_curriculum/



Virginia Department of Education

101 North 14th Street
Richmond VA 23219

Phone: 804-786-9412

Fax: 804-371-2455

E-mail: Charlie.Makela@doe.virginia.gov



We can't control the wind, but we can adjust the sails.

“The Real Meaning Of Peace”

Author Unknown

"There once was a king who offered a prize to the artist who would paint the best picture of peace. Many artists tried. The king looked at all the pictures. But there were only two he really liked, and he had to choose between them.

One picture was of a calm lake. The lake was a perfect mirror for peaceful towering mountains all around it. Overhead was a blue sky with fluffy white clouds. All who saw this picture thought that it was a perfect picture of peace.

The other picture had mountains, too. But these were rugged and bare. Above was an angry sky, from which rain fell and in which lightning played. Down the side of the mountain tumbled a foaming waterfall. This did not look peaceful at all.

But when the king looked closely, he saw behind the waterfall a tiny bush growing in a crack in the rock. In the bush a mother bird had built her nest. There, in the midst of the rush of angry water, sat the mother bird on her nest - in perfect peace.

Which picture do you think won the prize? The king chose the second picture. Do you know why?

"Because," explained the king, "peace does not mean to be in a place where there is no noise, trouble, or hard work. Peace means to be in the midst of all those things and still be calm in your heart. That is the real meaning of peace."

<http://www.inspirationpeak.com/shortstories/realpeace.html>

Controlled Blogging and Email

What is Think.com?

Think.com provides free email and web sites for everyone in your school. It is a web-based environment for primary and secondary schools, funded by the Oracle Education Foundation. Every member is given access to the tools and space to create and share their work online.

How did Think.com come to be?

Since 1998, Think.com has grown from a pilot email program into a versatile instructional tool for primary and secondary students and educators. The growth of Think.com is due to the care and support of many people and organizations. We invite you to learn how Think.com came to be by reading the [History of Think.com](#).

How can Think.com be used in the classroom?

There are many ways that educators can use Think.com as a learning tool. A school can integrate lessons from any curricular area into Think.com, including writing assignments, team collaboration, WebQuests, homework assistance, after school programs, and much more. Think.com can enhance any lesson by integrating text, video, images, and sound. Students and teachers can use Think.com from school, home or the library. Teachers can also use it to communicate with parents and provide summaries of homework and classroom activities.

http://www.think.com/en_us/

